

NOTES OF THE MONTH

Man-Power

On June 30th a large number of film workers' deferment cases are due to come up for review. The film industry succeeded last year—after something of a struggle—in establishing the necessity of retaining what was, in effect, a minimum number of people in order to maintain a satisfactory output of feature as well as of propaganda films. The arguments for the deferment of key personnel need no repetition, since they are just as valid now as they were then (see *D.N.L.*, April, 1941). Nevertheless, the entire film industry is perturbed at the recent action of the Ministry of Labour in setting up a new man-power panel to deal with films. This perturbation arises largely from the fact that the new panel, unlike the last, does not include representatives of the industry. It has three members. Two of them, Col. Bromhead and S. Rowson, are, it is true, film-men; but on this panel they appear as government servants, the former representing the M.O.I. and the latter the Board of Trade. The qualifications of the third member of the panel—Professor Plant—would appear to arise from the fact that he was a member of the Moyne Commission. We have no doubt that these three gentlemen are sincerely anxious to reconcile the general needs of man-power with the particular needs of the film industry in war-time; and we hope that if they find any unqualified or obviously redundant workers still in employment in films they will take the obvious and appropriate action. But as far as the documentary and propaganda side of the industry is concerned, we are certain that the strictest possible investigation would merely prove once again the fact that the documentary firms have hardly enough staff to fulfil the increasing demands of Government Departments for official propaganda, informational or instructional films. It would, however, be a disaster if the case for deferment of feature film workers were to be neglected. It cannot be too often stressed that a healthy national film industry is not merely a national asset but also a national necessity. Films like *The Foreman Went to France* or *One of Our Aircraft is Missing* show that the feature film makers have a sense of responsibility as well as imaginative and technical ability. For these reasons we hope that the stories of feature film companies having rough passages with the new panel over the deferment of key personnel are untrue or exaggerated. If by any chance they are not, we urge the Ministry of Labour to give the trade every facility to state its case to the new panel, which, unlike the more representative body which it has superseded, is not intimately involved in the immediate problems of production and distribution.

A Box Office Instructional

A NOTEWORTHY example of the value of a British feature film industry is provided by the release to the public of a film originally made for troop-training purposes. *Next of Kin* is having a deserved success with the public, and is at the same time doing a good job of propaganda, particularly in its final sequence, which (because it is a training film) shows the process of war in anything but a romantic light and thereby punches home its "Don't talk" message in an exceptionally vigorous manner. *Next of Kin* was made for the Department of Army Kinematography, and one would like to hope that all the films put out by this department (most of which are, of course, on a much more modest scale) were equally successful in putting their message or their instruction across with the same compelling vigour. But reports received from a number of men in the Services appear to indicate very much otherwise. Some of the films, we are told, are monotonous to the point of somnolence; others make statements which conflict with current training. Too many films are shown at the same time, often when the audience is already tired—physically or mentally—or both. In general there would still

seem to be room for improvement both at the production and at the distribution end of the D.A.K.

Too Many Committees

THE BASIS of democratic government is the committee. But while the committee is democracy's greatest strength, it can also become its greatest weakness. For instance, it becomes weakness when a democratic method of government is losing ground; for then the committee, instead of acting as the consultative organisation geared to vitalise the community, becomes instead a method of stifling criticism, or of channelling it off into sterility. These thoughts are provoked by the multiplicity of committees now engaged in considering all aspects of film and propaganda. Members of the Editorial Board find that no week passes without their being engaged at a minimum of three meetings a week. If all these committees led to constructive action and if all these committees were intended to have power, nobody could complain. But the thought is beginning to occur to many people that these committees are being used to suppress or side-track any critical voice. For years now skilful method of government has been seized on by vested interests, aimed at utilising a "get-together" method to achieve all manner of dubious ambitions of their own. They pander to the innate vanity of human beings by giving them "off the record" information so that they, the committee, feel more important than their fellow-men. They deliberately set members of committees against one another, skilfully exploiting presumed self interest. They allow resolutions to be passed and decisions taken which cannot be dealt with until the next meeting, by which time new deletions and "references back" can water down decisive action. We wonder whether this present sprawling mass of committees in the Film Industry, which is multiplied a thousand times over in other industries, is not an insidious method of direct governing by vested interests, mainly industrial but also departmental? While we still talk of "they" and not "we", the committee still fundamentally remains an opportune weapon for vested interests operating a phoney democracy.

The Last House

WHILE THE M.O.I. Five Minuters seem, on the whole, to be achieving a pretty good circulation, we have recently received disturbing reports that some cinemas have taken to omitting them from their last performance. The last house—particularly nowadays—is the fullest house, and if the Five Minuters are not shown it must mean a considerable drop in the total audience figures. We shall be glad to receive reports from readers of occasions when the Five Minute film was not shown at the last performance. Please give time, place, and date.

Stop It

IT APPEARS that, despite their utter uselessness and wastefulness, direct advertising films are still being made. Cannot the M.O.I. take some direct action in this matter either on its own account or in conjunction with the Board of Trade? There is every reason for action, since the latest scandal to be reported is that a very large London cinema was found, a few weeks ago, to be running a film advertising tea in place of the M.O.I. Five Minuter. Once more we must reiterate that the advertising film has no place in the national effort. If any competent technicians are being employed on the production of these films, they should be drafted either into units engaged on work of national value or into the army. In cases of this sort the Ministry of Labour man-power panel should, always providing it knows its job, have no difficulty in separating the sheep from the goats. Every advertising film made during war is a waste of film, of man-power and of mind-power.

FEATURE FILM PROPAGANDA

DURING the first two years of war the film was making its contribution to the war effort almost exclusively through the medium of the short documentary. For the most part feature films continued to provide simple, peacetime-style entertainment and many people in the film industry appeared to be content with this situation and happy in the rôle of providing for cinema-goers a means of vicarious escape from the painful fact of war. The majority of film-makers, however, felt that they were professionally equipped to play a more serious part. They did not wish simply to provide light entertainment for people engaged in a life and death struggle: they wished to make films which would themselves be weapons of war. As a consequence our screens have lately been swamped with propaganda features—films about the war from British studios which are beginning to be supplemented by Hollywood's first reactions to Pearl Harbour. We have the advantage in Britain of something like a year's output of propaganda features based on some consideration of the problems of relating propaganda and entertainment, and it is to be hoped that Hollywood will study our failures and successes before letting loose their own inevitable flood of war pictures. For—let us face it—our own failures outnumber our successes and although by now we have had plenty of opportunity to arrive at mature decisions the problems of the feature war film are by no means solved.

To begin with there still exists a tendency to believe that entertainment value and propaganda value must be two separate considerations. Without entertainment value a film will be a commercial failure and therefore the mistake has often been made of arranging for the entertainment value first and then trying to add such propaganda emphases as will not impair the entertainment. On this line of reasoning we generally finish up with an old-fashioned thriller incorporating odd irrelevant lines of dialogue about freedom, persecution, fascism; or one of the characters will hold up the action while he makes a wordy and self-conscious speech about democracy. Hollywood has been particularly guilty of this technique and was self-consciously employing it to slip in a good word for democracy long before America came into the war. It is a hangover from the days when gangster films were being made acceptable to public morality committees by the addition of a pious peroration about graft-free government.

The obvious weakness of this type of film is the clear division between what is regarded by its producers as entertainment and what has been added as propaganda. The audience is over-aware of the distinction. They see a conventional film made according to a familiar story-formula and either they immediately recognise the propaganda for the awkward appendage it is or they are suspicious of the pill which has been so imperfectly sugared.

So much for the plots which wear their propaganda pinned on them like a war-service badge. There is another type of propaganda feature which exhibits a similar weakness. This is the film with a war-time plot which obeys identically the same dramatic conventions as have become traditionally associated in the cinema with purely fictional themes. Here the war background of realism and fact is subsidiary to a personal story of romantic adventure—often a

simple love story—and the war is used only to provide a topical atmosphere. Into this category fall such films as *Ships with Wings* (the aircraft carrier was only a background for the old story of the reckless flyer in disgrace retrieving his reputation and the respect of the boss's daughter by giving his life for his comrades); *Pimpernel Smith* (absent-minded professor becoming the instrument of justice), and *One Night in Lisbon* (traditional spy melodrama). Films of this kind are bad propaganda because they present the war in absurdly romantic terms and their entertainment value is impaired by the conflict in the mind of the audience between the hard facts of real war and its glamorous embellishments in the film.

Let us consider what has been achieved by the many recent films which have been specifically about the war and have not merely used it as background or made passing references to it or to underlying political and philosophical issues. Amongst the most important films in this category are *49th Parallel*, *The Big Blockade*, *One of Our Aircraft is Missing*, *The Day Will Dawn*, *The Foreman Went to France* (all British), together with a big batch of American films on the Gestapo. These films take themes such as anti-Nazism in the occupied countries, the temperamental clash between individual democrats and fascists, the economic war against Germany, the menace of secret Nazi organisations in the United States, and seek to present all these in entertaining form.

The Big Blockade was the most ambitious of them, attempting as it did the fearsome task of presenting a complete picture of economic warfare. The producers clearly felt that they had on their hands a very large propaganda pill which would need to be generously coated. The result was a sour-sweet hotch-potch, a curious compound of academics and box-office tricks, which failed to be either informative or entertaining. The plain fact was that the film had attempted too much. *One of Our Aircraft is Missing* and *The Day Will Dawn* were less pretentious, yet failed for other reasons to present a convincing picture of the experiences of British fugitives in occupied territory. These films, one felt, were the product of studio-bred imaginations. The episodes and the dialogue, gestures and glances that composed them, came not from the war but from some scenario-writer's handy guide to box-office appeal. The people in these two films were not real—and that was not simply because they were played by familiar actors, handicap though that is in this type of film. The characters were lay figures without that indefinable something in gesture or appearance that distinguishes the man from the mummer. In *49th Parallel*, however, Michael Powell did achieve something quite remarkable with familiar screen faces. Here was a film with an idea—the personal clash between individual Nazis of different types and a number of representative democrats. The idea was good as entertainment and good as a propaganda opportunity. Within the simple theme of the film, propaganda and entertainment were fused—it was the propaganda itself that was entertaining. *49th Parallel* simply proves once again that the presence of an imaginative idea (that rare asset) will guarantee the success of any film whether it be for entertainment or propaganda. *The Foreman Went to France*, the last on our list of films about the war, is in most ways the best. The rea-

son for its superiority, both as entertainment and propaganda, over *One of Our Aircraft is Missing* is especially interesting. Both films are based upon a real war-time occurrence yet *One of Our Aircraft is Missing* lacks confidence in the dramatic power of the actual event and has consequently embellished it, translated it out of terms of ordinary human behaviour and tried to prove too many generalisations about occupied Holland. The film has outgrown the strength of its original anecdote. *The Foreman Went to France* sticks to its story and tries to stick to its human beings. The French are there all the time, not too much emphasised, not pointed out crudely as heroes or saints to prove a propaganda point, but left to move easily and naturally through the scenes as decent people with their weaknesses as well as their strengths.

This surely is the way to use an entertainment medium to make propaganda for the things we are fighting for. Don't try to tell the whole story of France or Holland or Norway or Britain, but take some people and show what happens to them in a credible war situation—it may be a real situation or an imaginary one—provided it is credible that doesn't matter. The really important thing is that the people you choose should stay human. The public doesn't believe that the war is being fought between an army of plaster saints on our side and an army of creatures with horns and tails on the other. Outside the cinema they never meet people from either category and it is useless to make propaganda in terms of beings that exist only in the cinema. If you do so your propaganda will relate only to a cinema war and—if it has any effect at all—it will create a glamourised dream image of war which is vastly more dangerous than if you had no propaganda at all. War cannot be conducted according to the romantic traditions of behaviour which motivate conventional film scenarios.

The propaganda power of realistic treatment and the inhibitions of conventional treatment are admirably demonstrated in *The Next of Kin*. The opening reels are cluttered up with conventional nonsense but wherever the film has to deal with situations or behaviour on which its army audiences are expert it becomes realistic, and in consequence makes first-class propaganda and first-class entertainment. For the first time in a studio-made film we see a real battle between real soldiers. The Russians understand completely the importance in propaganda of realistic treatment and credible human behaviour. Their biographical films of other wars still make good propaganda in this. Compare *General Suvorov* with Hollywood's *Sergeant York*. The flesh and blood of the latter story has been hidden by a lacquer of glamour and romance. It becomes simply a new novelettish adventure of Gary Cooper's. *The New Teacher*, a pre-war Soviet film on education, is war propaganda because it is propaganda for a country clearly worth fighting for. It is a country inhabited by people who look, laugh, complain and struggle like people, not like movie-stars. For a source both of propaganda and entertainment let the British and American studios go back to the people who are fighting this war. Let us see not only why they are fighting and how they are fighting but let us be inspired by the fact that the war does not change them—they remain human beings.

The Documentary of the Month

THE HARVEST SHALL COME

Production: Realist Film Unit for Imperial Chemical Industries. **Producer:** Basil Wright. **Direction:** Max Anderson. **Camera:** A. E. Jeakins. **Script:** H. W. Freeman. **Music:** William Alwyn. **Commentators:** Edmund Willard and Bruce Belfrage. **Cast:** John Slater, Eileen Beldon and Richard George. **Running time:** 40 minutes.

The documentary film has too frequently in the past and still today been stigmatised as a cold, objective reporting of facts. Its critics harp back to the early days of sound when many documentaries were simply pictures illustrated by commentary. The critics have taken no heed of the advances made by documentary since 1933. Grierson emphasised in this advance the importance of the human factor in relation to whatever story was being told, but as it was not at first possible to employ expensive synchronous sound, the earliest documentaries were restricted to the bringing alive of ordinary human beings in visual terms. Grierson brought Robert Flaherty to this country to add to the documentary films that quality of human feeling that Flaherty had so successfully developed elsewhere. Parallel with this development went the development of sound. The documentary was impatient with the purely reproductive cinema, and when it acquired sound, it endeavoured to use it imaginatively. Grierson brought Cavalcanti to this country to aid in this development; so that simultaneously two developments were proceeding—the development of the human interest and the development of imaginative sound.

These developments did not obscure the fact that documentary was not being built up simply as a method of film-making but as a means to an end. Its readiness to adopt all the new developments and to be in the van of technical progress did not mean that it was neglecting the possibilities of other methods of evolving its theories. There were many attempts to adapt the story. At first documentary naturally looked to the reporting of true stories from life, and these found their beginnings in *North Sea*. There were two reasons why documentaries did not go more fully into the story type of film—one was their desire to master craft; and secondly, the limitation of finance. Films like *Merchant Seamen* and *Target for Tonight* are films modelled on the work done in the early *North Sea* period. They have an immediate dramatic appeal because their subjects in themselves are dramatic; but today that side of documentary film-making shows no signs of advance, except in technical quality.

These remarks are only a preface to consideration of a new documentary film, *The Harvest Shall Come*, which marks one of documentary's most significant steps forward. It is the first genuine story film made with the documentary purpose and by documentary method. The story is that of a farm labourer and his family, their life from the day when he joins the farm as a youngster in the nineteen-hundreds to the present war. The main parts are played by actors, and the background is filled in by local

Suffolk villagers. Because of the integrity of the script writing and direction there are no points where the two groups clash. The actors merge into their background. There are no false situations and there are none of the story twists so dear to the hearts of our professional script-writers. The film pulls no punches and tells the unfortunate story of the decay of British agriculture, which in the last forty years has only been encouraged by the incidence of two wars. The story is fiction, but it reflects the life of every British farm labourer and is heart-tearing in its sincerity and in the power of its deliberate understatement. It is a great tribute to that section of the community—the farm workers—who have borne the burden of the industry's decay.

The film has all been photographed on location and tells its story purely by dialogue. Even the cottage interiors were shot in the village. There is a lack of technical polish about the film which only adds to its quality as a rugged documentary. It has been argued that a certain technical brilliance of the photography in *The Grapes of Wrath* tended to emphasise the unreality of certain sequences, particularly in the "Okie" camp. If there is any criticism to be made it is that the artificial sequence of the two women

who tip the main character because he is only a farm labourer illustrates the difficulty in adding to an honest story some extraneous incident to push the argument home.

The film has deliberately eschewed the lyrical approach to the countryside so beloved of the romantic impressionists of documentary. Here there are no fine billowing clouds and rich meadow-land looming through the filters. It is not forgotten that behind the beauty of the rambler roses and the thatched roof is the squalor of rural housing. The film is sober in tone and has that purposeful insistence on facts that is a characteristic of all good documentary.

The film marks the emergence of one of the best documentary directors for many years—Max Anderson—and of the actors, it should be said that John Slater, playing the main character, is an outstanding interpreter of working-class character. There is no doubt that this film must be shown in the ordinary cinemas, and will undoubtedly prove an outstanding success. Its honesty, its closeness to the hopes and fears of ordinary people, its reflection of the nobility and heroism of the ordinary working man, will reach out to the hearts of any audience.

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FILMS OF GREAT BRITAIN LIMITED

The Feature Film of the Month

THE NEW TEACHER

The New Teacher. Production: Lenfilm 1939. Directed by Sergei Gerasimov. Photography: V. Yakovlev. With Boris Chirkov as the teacher, Pavel Volkov as his father, L. Shabalina as his sister and Tamara Makarova as the girl friend.

It's a funny thing about Russian films over the last ten years or so, those that we've seen over here at any rate, how few of them deal with contemporary problems and present day Russian life. I suppose the main reason for this is that the old-guard directors, middle class intellectuals to the last, were heartily bored with the period of five-year plans and Soviet construction, and always wanted to be harking back to the good old days of upheaval, when noble revolutionaries were having exciting times shooting people. Old Professor Eisenstein, presented in *The General Line* with the magnificent theme of the revolution of agriculture by the collective farm and new techniques, was much more interested in old-time religious rituals and could find in the arrival of a new cream separator only a sexual significance. A village getting electric light for the first time, so important to the people concerned, to the intellectuals who had always had it was just a bore. Uncle Pudovkin, baulked of bombs and street-fighting at home, ran off to Germany where there was still some going, to make *Deserter*. Only Dovzhenko calmly carried on in his same old line, which as *Ivan, Aerograd* and *Shors* showed, magnificently survives a revolution, construction war or any other human activity.

Of course we knew really that there must be plenty of other stuff going on under the surface, young working lads coming on who were part and parcel of the new society and not hangovers from the old, directors who were from the people and part of them, who looked on them as equals and not as queer creatures who must be talked and teased into doing what they were told. Fred Ermiller, from the silent days, carried on (in *Counterplan* and others) in his same quiet constructive way. Kozintsev and Trauberg in the *Maxim* series got a bit nearer to present day stuff; there was Dzigan, there was Macheret of *Men and Jobs*. And there was a whole run of films which, although second-grade or even worse technically, were far more interesting just because they showed something of contemporary Russia than all the dreary overdressed historical reconstructions like *Nevsky* or *Suvorov*. All the time while watching a poor film like *Jazz Comedy* or *The Rich Bride* you got a feeling of excitement at getting some idea of what up and coming Russians were feeling and doing.

And now here at last is *The New Teacher*, the first really complete expression of the new Russia, a fine subject and a fine film. Gerasimov the director is only a young lad—apparently his first film *The Seven Brave* was shown over here a

few years ago—but in spite of, or rather, probably because of that, he seems more completely at home with talkie technique than any other Russian directors. The film is on the whole as well made, the people as nicely handled and placed for the camera, and the detail as full as anything by John Ford, say, whose films Gerasimov knows well, I bet. There are one or two roughnesses of course, but in the end they don't affect the real quality of the film at all. This quality is made up of a creative belief in the possibilities of human life, a firm sense of being at home in the world and liking it and a warm human feeling for the pleasantness of people. I don't remember ever having seen a film where you got a stronger impression of people with confidence and independence who were going to make of life exactly what they wanted. And when at the end the hero jumps out of the window, looks out over the moonlit countryside and exclaims "Ah! Life, life!" you know that here are people for whom as for the Americans the world is all fresh and new, a place of limitless possibilities; but people for whom this vital innocence and simplicity is based, not as in the new world on ignorance, but on full knowledge. You have only to compare this film with any German film to realise completely where the hope of the old world with its load of guilt lies.

The New Teacher (a bad title) is a simple story about a village and a family in the new Russia. The son, beautifully played by Boris Chirkov (*Maxim*) has been working as a teacher in Moscow and thought of by the village as a lad who has gone to the big city and made good. He comes back to the village, and their eager welcome of their distinguished visitor turns to disappointment and anger when they find that he's come not on a visit, but to stay. Clever, distinguished and pushful relations are all very well in the big city at a distance from which you can safely boast about them and their exploits, but it is altogether a different story when they're on your own doorstep upsetting your life with their fancy ideas. The rest of the film tells how he comes to terms with the village, with his father and family, with his girl friend and with himself, and the strength of the film is that all these conflicts are honestly resolved and not sentimentally by-passed. The film is warm and human and all the people very pleasant, but what is so good is that the point of the film is not how pleasant the people are, but where they're getting to. There is no morbid interest in private emotions: these people are part of a live community, and their feelings are all shared feelings.

In a way you could call the whole thing propaganda, but that doesn't matter in the least, partly because it never tries to twist the truth and partly because you can always listen to somebody carrying on if he really cares about what he is

talking about. There is an amazing richness of detail about the whole film which shows that Gerasimov really understands what's going on and hasn't mechanically simplified everything. There's the set-up in the family itself, father an old Partisan Bolshevik who dominates the others, mother under this thumb, auntie under both of them, and driven silly by continual housework, daughter very much alive and independent and obviously quite capable of dealing with dad when the time comes. There's the understanding of other people's points of view shown by dad's practical complaints about the holidays interfering with his moving—he's chairman of the collective farm. And there's the relationship of father and son, so often done before but never so well as this. Father half-proud, half-contemptuous of his son, resentful of his youth and cleverness, trying to patronise him and half hoping he's going to make a fool of himself; son nervous as a cat and falling into priggishness—a conflict honestly resolved, not as, for instance, in Renon's *Man Who Came Back* by a sentimental acceptance of the present, but by a creative view of the future.

And there's a crowd of detail which is extremely pleasant not only for its warmth and humour but for its added feeling of going somewhere: the dance to welcome the son home, with the girls coming forward one by one to sing themselves into the company; his sister and girl friend lying in bed afterwards listening to father carrying on and chatting intimately of adolescent this and that's; the village question-meeting with the boy asking advice on an appalling Heath Robinson invention which won't work; the holidaytime with the two lovers in embarrassed and frustrated silence while the shouts of people enjoying themselves together come faintly over the meadows; and the end, where the teacher, on terms at last with his girl friend, is warmed all through at the pleasantness of life in general, lifts his young sister on to the stairs and kisses her, goes into his own room, and gazing at his airman pal who is shamming sleep, remarks, "What a funny fellow", and then jumps out of the window to have a look at the night and think how nice life is. The only thing I could have wished was for him when he came back into his room to have fetched out a bottle of vodka, woken his pal and then had a bloody good booze-up together. It would have made a perfect end: but never mind, the film is beautifully made and beautifully acted, particularly father, son and sister, and what's more it is a real treat to meet a director who, well in with the people as he is, takes for granted the fact that they are pleasant and goes on from there to tell them what they should be up to. If up and coming Russia is like this (and I'm sure it is), there's nothing for Stalin to worry about, and Hitler is just wasting his own and everybody's time.

NEW DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Middle East. *Production:* Shell Film Unit. *Producer:* Edgar Anstey. *Direction:* Grahame Tharp. *Diagrams:* Francis Rodker. M.O.I. 5 minutes.

Subject: The importance of the Middle East in allied world strategy.

Treatment: Plain diagrams with the minimum of animation, straight commentary and a few drum rolls. The subject is clearly treated and well expressed but by its nature it is really no more than a lecture illustrated by a map of the world. Only in one place, the illustration of what the greater length of sea communications means to us, is there any real use of diagrams. The film does, however, succeed in giving quite a clear picture.

Propaganda Value: It is, of course, a very good idea for the M.O.I. to try and keep the public informed on issues of world strategy such as this, and for a middle-class audience no doubt this film will prove successful; but for the average cinema-going public it is all too remote and didactic. The schoolmasterly approach combined with the refined and nasal (not so say rheumy) tones of the commentator will only serve to make the general public feel that it is something which does not really concern them. I don't know what the solution is (certainly it will have to include actuality material) but something will certainly have to be done to humanise these informative films if they are to fulfil their purpose.

London Scrapbook. *Production:* Spectator Short Films. *Producer:* Basil Wright. *Direction:* Derek de Marney and Eugene Cekalski. *Camera:* A. H. Luff. *Collected by* Bessie Love and Basil Radford with Leslie Mitchell.

Subject: The film deals with the small changes and slight, semi-picturesque situations incidental to the more violent distress of war and through them it seeks to characterise the manner by which the familiar disasters of London have altered its outward scenes and the lives of the people living in it. The film is for American consumption.

Treatment: The lightness of the subject is reflected in the treatment, and Bessie Love is excellent as the unselfconscious cine-kodak amateur trying to sell her "Scrapbook" to a film-weary Films Division. No criticism of the superficial jauntiness of the film should overlook the fact that its purpose is to show those very subjects which, though less profound and therefore usually ignored, may, if properly handled, throw into relief some of the deeper sufferings which the people of London and other cities have undergone. For example, the extremely effective and nostalgic shot of the empty, windy playground in Kensington Gardens, with only one child ("the only child in London") left to feed the ducks at the feet of Peter Pan, must be as sharp in its effect on a New York mother as a complete film on the evacuation of school children. The extent to which the film succeeds in this kind of respect is the proper measure of its propaganda value, for mere light-heartedness by itself would not suffice as a pretext for showing such a film abroad. In this sense it is to be hoped, without wishing to be priggish about an extremely funny and

well-made film, that Americans will not make the mistake of believing that the tragedies of several million Londoners reduce themselves to a series of nostalgic spectacles and semi-humorous inconveniences, as they tend to do when viewed by an American woman living in circumstances likely to remove from war much of its more permanent severity. For example, Bessie Love's difficulties over rations are never so great as when she drops them in the park on her way to a party.

The film which is very well shot, contains a good parody on the M.O.I. and one of its officials (Leslie Mitchell) and is certainly excellent entertainment for anyone making documentary films and almost as certainly for everyone familiar with Anglo-Saxon cities.

Propaganda Value: An unusually incomprehensible paragraph on the M.O.I. programme sheet runs thus: "Owing to the fact that this film was in production when America entered the war, it has had to be re-designed and the propaganda content is therefore not as strong as it would have been but for the change of angle necessitated." Apart from what this may mean, it is safe to say that the film will at any rate suggest to Americans the depth of the sacrifice being forced by a changing environment upon a people more than usually reliant (if we are to believe the Americans) upon the familiar and traditional. Incidentally, it is a questionable whether parish jokes, however good, about fumblings at the M.O.I. are the most reassuring way of proving to Americans that our traditional sense of humour about ourselves has succeeded in keeping pace with the urgencies of total war.

Go to Blazes. *Direction:* Walter Ford. *Screen Play:* Diana Morgan, Angus MacPhail. *Camera:* Ernest Palmer. M.O.I. 5 minutes.

Subject: Will Hay demonstrates the funny (wrong) and the funny (right) way to tackle incendiaries.

Treatment: We are back to the good old days of blitz propaganda when the siren has always gone ten minutes ago. The mother and the daughter are the unsympathetic heroines who know that the right people no longer use a spray but a jet, and Will Hay, after fooling bravely with several fires is packed off to the Warden's Post next to the "Pig and Whistle" to brush up his A.R.P.

Propaganda Value: If people really lose their heads over incendiaries as quickly as Will Hay, or, like him, as soon forget the lessons they have been taught under fire, then the film ought to have been made. Otherwise not.

Men of India. *Presented by* M.O.I. *Made by* the Indian Film Unit, Bombay. *Direction:* Ezra Mir. *Camera:* Jinaraja Bodhye. *Editor:* Phatap Parmar. *Production:* Alexander Shaw. *English Commentary:* Edmund Willard for Strand Films.

Subject: Factory production in India and the part Indians are playing in the war effort.

Treatment: Indian fire-fighters at a realistic practice remind us that air-raids threaten also the war production of that continent. The forceful commentator—he who spoke on "Naval Operations"

—describes how the men of India, of many races and many religions, work side by side in the factory where they turn out armoured cars. They have the common brotherhood of skilled craftsmen. The feeling of high speed production is put across well by good cutting. The commentator reminds his audience that this tyre-fitter's father sold lamps in the bazaar, this rivetter's father knew nothing more mechanical than an ox-wagon. . . . It is a pity that we are not shown this side of Indian life. One cannot help feeling that the urgency of the factory, so effectively put across, cannot be as yet an outstandingly important aspect of life to the average Indian. Surely the old industries of India—the production of rice, hemp, cotton—are still vital.

It is most encouraging to see a film of high technical quality produced by an Indian Film Unit.

Propaganda value: The audience, particularly those members of it who work in factories, will be given more understanding of the Indian people and their way of living. Had it been possible to show the more general picture of Indian life it might have done an even better job.

In the Rear of the Enemy. *Production:* Soviet Children's Film Studio. *Direction:* Eugen Schneider.

Subject: This is the first full length Soviet film since the war to have been dubbed in English. It presents an extremely realistic picture of winter warfare which will give British people—civilian and military—a pretty graphic idea of what fighting is like in Arctic conditions. The story is simple enough, but full of interesting detail, and packed with suspense. A Soviet patrol of three men is sent out to reconnoitre the headquarters of the opposing troops (Finnish, but officered by Germans).

They reach the objective but are trapped. Two of them attempt to break back through the lines, but the third stays to give Soviet H.Q. the range for an artillery bombardment which destroys the Finnish guns. Soviet infantry follow up and annihilate the enemy. The three heroes are saved.

The story is one of simple courage and endurance based on that dynamic belief in a cause that is at the base of Russia's successes against the Fascist powers. It is a picture that could usefully be shown to British troops and to the Home Guard, for in addition to the natural excitement of the story there are many lessons in guerilla tactics and the art of camouflage. The way the three Russians reconnoitre the enemy house before entering it is an object lesson in precaution, although one of them slips up badly later when he fails to observe a peculiar mound in the snow which conceals a Finnish soldier.

Propaganda value: The Red Army men and officers in the film are all extremely pleasant people, tough, efficient and human; you get a feeling that they know their job and nothing will stop them doing it. All in all, the film is very good propaganda not only for the Soviet Union, but for the cause of all anti-Fascist peoples.

This is Colour. *Production:* Strand Films for Imperial Chemical Industries. *Producer:* Basil Wright. *Location Direction:* Jack Elliott. *Camera:* Jack Cardiff. *Sound Track:* Richard Addinsell, Dylan Thomas, Marjorie Fielding, Joseph MacLeod, Valentine Dyall. Made in Technicolor.

Subject: The history, production and use of British dyes.

Treatment: This film is a sight for sore eyes. In a world which war is making drabber every day, with its camouflage, its khaki and its rationing of paint and wrappings, *This is Colour* gives us seventeen minutes of pure visual pleasure. The treatment fortunately is academic, thus co-ordinating what might have easily turned out to be a colour riot. It first discusses colour in general terms of landscape, of prisms, of sunlight and of a red rose in the moonlight. The discovery of new dyeing methods leads us on to experiments with dyes and then to their manufacture. In a superbly mysterious sequence, with the camera moving slowly across the dark paraphernalia of the dye factory with its flamboyant splashes of colour, we see the dyes being prepared and applied. The rollers turn, placing colour upon pattern and colour upon colour, reeling out yards of gaiety. So far the film has swung along, now it stops. A gabbling voice endeavours to review, in too neat poetry, the uses of colour in the world to-day. Scarlet tooth-brush is followed by green hot-water bottle, book-jackets by window curtains. This sequence is not only jarring, it also shows up one of the great deficiencies of the use of colour in film. The coloured image lingers in the eye for much longer than the black and white, and quick cutting produces an irritating blur.

But as if aware of this coloured hiccup, the film makes up for it by ending superbly. A voice says: "Now let all the colours dance", and the last sequence is a beautifully conceived movement of colour in abstract shapes. Poetry, movement and colour combine to enchant the eye and ear.

Propaganda Value. Perhaps exports are not of such vital importance nowadays. If this is so, the march of events have left the vital propaganda message of this film behind. But it still remains a good film and does its job superbly well.

Mobile Engineers. *Production:* Strand Film Co. *Producer:* Donald Taylor. *Director:* Michael Gordon. *Camera:* Bernard Browne. *Script and Commentary:* Reg. Groves. Played and spoken by men of the National Industrial Mobile Squad. M.O.I. 5 minutes.

Subject. The mobile squads of engineers who travel from factory to factory helping to train new workers, and who constantly evolve new methods of speeding up production.

Treatment. The film kicks off with a nicely directed dialogue scene in a railway carriage, in which we meet the gang of mobile engineers on their way to a new job. Unfortunately the rest of the film, which shows what they do at the factory, is commented somewhat facetiously by one of them, and there is no further dialogue. As a result the film is a bit remote, although the activities of the engineers are clearly enough explained. The making of a new jig might surely have been treated with more warmth and excitement. The film is well edited and moves at a good pace.

Propaganda value. This film is chiefly an informational job. It tells us that there are these mobile engineers, shows us the problems they meet and

how they solve them. It impels no action or thought of action. If its theme had been the urgency of increased production and if the story of the engineers had been clearly presented as part only of the extra efforts needed from everyone, its propaganda value would have been excellent.

Storing Vegetables Outdoors and Storing Vegetables Indoors. M.O.I. for the Ministry of Agriculture. *Production:* Realist Film Unit. *Direction:* M. S. Thompson. *Camera:* A. E. Jeakins. *Commentator:* Roy Hay. Non-T.

Subject: These two films are part of a general series sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture. The first shows how to store potatoes and carrots in clamps. The second deals with the indoor storing of shallots, runner beans, onions, beets, haricot beans and tomatoes.

Treatment: The simple, straightforward technique adopted is admirable for this type of instructional film. The commentaries state the essentials and leave time for absorption. Photo-

graphy is very good and the direction doesn't wander into by-passes that have nothing to do with the matter in hand.

Propaganda value: As one of those unfortunate people who heartily detest gardening but have had an allotment pushed on to me, I found both films helpful in the extreme. Having been pushed to the point of actually putting stuff in I want to know what to do with it when it comes up. The films tell me that clearly and precisely, but I would complain that it all looks a darn sight easier than (to me) it actually is. The lad making the clamps, for instance, is blessed with soil that practically fights to get on his spade before it touches the ground. Not so with me or judging from what I have seen, with a lot of other sweating allotmenteers.

Maybe in future films it would be a good idea to take these factors into account and deal with some of the difficulties that confront the average bloke who is trying to anticipate the threatened food shortage this coming winter.

THE GOLD RUSH AGAIN

Robert Waithman reports on the revival of Chaplin's film in New York

Reprinted by courtesy of the *News Chronicle*

THE sudden sight of Charlie Chaplin in the *Gold Rush* on the canopy outside the Globe Theatre on Broadway stops you in your tracks. You haven't seen those words for sixteen or seventeen years and there's a bitter-sweet nostalgia in the look of them.

The crowd streaming past the theatre is largely made up of 1942 soldiers and bluejackets out for the night on Broadway. They can go into this and other theatres for little more than a quarter of the usual admission price. You notice a lot of them are going in.

"A revival with a new commentary written and spoken by Charles Chaplin and incidental music," the sign says. You remember the incidental music last time—the tinny but penetrating and tireless music that came from behind a musty felt curtain in the orchestra pit.

Golden days, innocent days, days when there was no blot upon the honourable trade of paper-hanging, days when a man who spoke of retiring to a previously prepared position could only have meant he was going to live on his pension at Brighton.

You walk up a lush carpet and sit down in the darkness and there he is, the little tramp prospecting in Alaska. His movements are steadier now because Hollywood in its wonderful way has somehow reprinted the film so that it can be shown at the modern speed instead of with the old flicker.

And now the confident and cultivated voice of Mr. Charles Chaplin is breaking in with bits of talk. He has an actor's voice capable of ranting melodrama or simple pathos.

"Get out of here!" Black Larsen cried." Chaplin shouts at one point as he tells the story he is watching on the screen; but at another point where heroine Georgia is visiting the lovelorn Charlie in his lonely shack Chaplin is saying softly, "There she stood, her loveliness lighting the room. . . ."

He calls his image "the little fellow" through-

out the commentary. The Chaplin who is speaking is 53 and his hair is white, and he is looking back on his own past. Sometimes he sounds achingly fond of the picture and its people.

The acting of his leading lady, Georgia Hale, was often ludicrous by modern standards and her make-up would have driven Max Factor mad. But Chaplin loves her. When she first appears he speaks her name gently and tenderly, as though he were talking to himself.

And there is the saloon and Charlie's trousers are falling down as they fell down in 1925.—*Locarno and the League and the Washington Arms Conference*.

Charlie starving in the cabin has cooked and is eating one of his boots, spitting the nails out carefully and with refinement and Big Jim is going mad and they are rushing in and out of the cabin doors. 1925.—"It ain't gonna rain no more" and the Dayton monkey trial; the year before the General Strike.

When the cabin was swinging over the precipice and Charlie opened the door and hung over the abyss from the knob there came from the modern Broadway audience that same high-pitched roar as used to drown out the music of the pianist.

You believed it had gone with Channel swimming and the Charleston; but it hasn't. It is still there in everyone's throat, waiting for Charlie Chaplin to awaken it.

You come from the theatre and there's a big lighted sign looking down Broadway. It says, WE MUST WORK AND FIGHT FOR OUR LIVES. The news sign is spelling out SUGAR RATIONING TO BEGIN MAY 5.

Two young Marines brush past and one is saying ". . . If you can use machine-guns so much the better. . . ." There was the music of a tinny piano and there's the music of machine-guns. One generation may hear both and another may come which will hear neither.

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DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER

stands for the use of film as a medium of propaganda and instruction in the interests of the people of Great Britain and the Empire and in the interests of common people all over the world.

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THE WORLD IN ACTION

An estimate of some of the productions of Canada's National Film Board, which it is hoped will shortly be available for showing in this country

SO FAR the British public has had no opportunity of seeing the series of vigorous films on world strategy in war put out at two monthly intervals by the National Film Board of Canada. Although these films have a wide circulation in the U.S.A. as well as in Canada itself, they are prevented from being shown here owing to a clause in the Films Act (1938), under which they are classified as "alien" and are not eligible for quota. At the time of writing there would appear to be some hope of action being taken to get rid of this ridiculously anomalous situation, and it will therefore be of interest to analyse the purpose and technique of the films in question.

Known in Canada under the general title of *Canada Carries On* and in the U.S.A. as *The World in Action* series, the films represent a definite policy decision taken by the Canadian Government early in World War II. This decision arose from the realisation that the widest possible knowledge of world strategy and of the significance of each incident of the war in relation to the conflict as a whole, was likely to be one of the most valuable means of informational and morale propaganda, and was incidentally the best way of connecting the work of the Canadian home front with the world-horizons which it serves. The *Canada Carries On* series was accordingly evolved, and every other month the issue was devoted to a world survey of some aspect of the war. The series was furthermore designed for theatrical use and had to stand or fall on its box-office appeal.

The question of style was therefore of some importance, and after due consideration the National Films Commissioner (John Grierson) and the Producer in charge (Stuart Legg) decided that the series should be made in the same style as the *March of Time*. This decision has been kept to in each item so far seen in this country. Each film consists largely of visuals illustrating a commentary and accompanied by music and effects; occasional dialogue scenes are introduced, and titles are used to punch home points and to introduce a new angle in the story.

The style is well chosen for the purpose in hand, and frequently knocks spots off the *March of Time* at its own game. But the style is not so important as the content and the policy and thought which lie behind. The basic policy has already been mentioned, and the titles of the items are in themselves fairly illustrative of the policy—*The Battle for Oil*, *The Strategy of Metals*, *Food—Weapon of Conquest*, *This is Blitz*, etc.

Behind each of these items one can detect not merely the brain of the experienced propagandist but also certain attributes without which any widely-based film cannot be more than superficially convincing. These attributes are:—
(i) Constant, intensive and imaginative research work;
(ii) Close attention to history, to immediate strategic considerations, and to the various possibilities as regards the future;
(iii) Elimination of makeshift visuals, and con-

centration on welding picture and commentary into an integral whole;
(iv) A strong sense of screen journalism;
(v) Fearlessness and forthrightness—both of which are impossible unless based on the preceding attributes.

The makers of these films would probably make no claim to have achieved perfection; nor does this article make that claim. But the value of the films as a stimulant both to thought and to action is such that they are worth detailed analysis.

It may be interesting to begin with a subject which has a definite parochial basis, and show how the producers deliberately related the parochial story to a vivid picture of its relation to the whole world. *The Strategy of Metals* begins with a vigorous, semi-poetic sequence taking us northward through Canada, past the cities and lakes and farms to a barren waste—the great Laurentian Shield—"a primæval monster, brooded over by an Arctic winter, with a summer three months long". This, says the commentator, as the camera moves grimly across a desolation of rock, snow, stunted trees, and frozen lakes, is one of democracy's greatest arsenals, for beneath its surface in abundance lie nearly all the metals on which our modern civilisation depends, and without which modern war could not be waged.

Note here that the attention of the audience is captured by the elements of suspense and surprise—not merely a technical trick, however, for it is valid whether you are already in possession of the facts or not.

The development of the Great Shield is then described, with emphasis laid on the fact that the mining centres depended and depend on air communications more than anything else.

So far we have had an impressive picture of this huge storehouse of essential metals being tapped—a picture which in itself gives us a heartening survey of United Nation resources as regards the supply of essential metals.

But now, suddenly, we are in British Guiana, with the ships loading up with a reddish earth called bauxite, without which aluminium cannot be made. In a few seconds the whole structure of the world markets for metals springs to life, and the Nazi position in this regard is vividly analysed.—Schacht buying in every market the metals without which Germany could not re-arm . . . the panzer divisions, the stukas, the submarines and pocket battleships all coming into existence from metals supplied from every quarter of the globe.

Note that we have now passed to a complete international picture, excellently illustrated by material from all quarters, including Germany. The menacing years of the 'Thirties gain a kind of perspective, and the stage is set.

But here comes a point of great technical interest. No attempt is made to build up anything out of the outbreak of the war. No time is wasted on the smashing of Poland. No dramatics. This line is right; the film is being shown to us, who know we are at war and have lived through

the period. Here we want not history but a perspective on history. And we get it. The war is signalled simply by one thing which is strictly relevant to the story of metals—the Allied Blockade cutting Germany off from her supplies of raw materials.

A fast moving sequence builds up to an analysis of the point at which Europe cannot supply the weight of metal needed for the Nazi war machine, and the need for the mineral wealth of the Urals is shown to be one of the factors in the attack on the U.S.S.R. (just as in *The Battle for Oil*, the wells of the Caucasus are shown to play a similar part).

So the film comes full circle back to the great Laurentian Shield, with its metals, some old and some very new, pouring out the materials to win the war now and to build a new world of peace in the future.

Note that through forceful presentation of the facts, allied to an imaginative line of ideas expressed through visuals, *The Strategy of Metals* leaves its audience not merely stimulated but also having assimilated an important story; not a collection of incoherent facts, but a story which can be remembered and can clarify many hitherto disorganized news items read in the paper or heard on the radio. Note too that the film is, in trade parlance, "gripping entertainment".

The Strategy of Metals is but one example of the series. The other items do not necessarily follow its structure, but they all tell a coherent and dramatic story.

The events of World War II have in nearly all cases moved faster than the propagandists. But it is noteworthy that the series of films under review have kept pace with events better, probably, than any other films. This is chiefly because they are the result of hard thinking and careful planning; and it is only in the case of *War Clouds in the Pacific* that events have almost entirely outstripped the film, whose makers, during last summer, were hardly in a position to foresee the loss of Hongkong, Malaya, Singapore, and the attack on an unprepared Pearl Harbour.

Nevertheless *War Clouds in the Pacific* contains some remarkably interesting sequences. One, stressing the importance of the Aleutian Islands as the stepping stones between Alaska and Japan, leads into a final sequence depicting the great activity which is going on along the Western Seaboard of the New World—the air routes striking ever Northwards to the new bases of Alaska. Incidentally the animated maps in these sequences are striking examples of the use of this technique, which is also very much to the fore in *Battle for Oil* and *Strategy of Metals*. By using maps shaded to represent relief and also depicted as a segment of the globe rather than an arbitrary square from Mercator's Projection, they get an effect which is far more accurate as regards the sense of size and distance, and which has at times almost a realistic effect—the latter being heightened by superimposing moving clouds faintly in the background. In *War Clouds in the Pacific* the contrast between Mercator's Projection and the globe is very adroitly used to punch home the reason why the Aleutian Islands are of vital strategic importance.

The visuals of these Canadian films depend largely on the intelligent use of library material. It is indeed difficult to realize that nearly all the material used by the National Film Board is also available over here. Nor is it merely a question of availability; it is far more a question of

choice of material and the skilful cutting of it. In general it may be said that no commentary phrase in any of these Canadian films lacks an appropriate visual. In other words they have not forgotten that the picture must tell the story as well as, and in partnership with, the sound track.

Two especially notable examples of this use of brilliantly cut library material are to be seen in *Churchill's Island*, and *This is Blitz*—the former an early 1941 production and the latter completed early in 1942.

Churchill's Island was not made with an eye to circulation in Britain. It was rather made to bolster up Britain's reputation overseas at a time when it was sagging rather dangerously; and it certainly paints a picture of us that is more than flattering. It has a technical interest over here, firstly because it so largely draws on material from British propaganda films, and secondly because it shows the special uses to which that material can be put. The most exciting sequence in the film, for instance, is built up as follows:—The Nazis blast their way across Europe, France falls, the channel coasts are manned by Germans. Using sensational German newsreel material accompanied by a transcript of Hitler's speech threatening Britain with destruction, a fearsome tattoo of danger and aggression is beaten out, culminating in shots of E Boats approaching Dover cliffs (alleged) and the huge cross-channel guns firing. But, as the last gun fires, the film cuts abruptly to the A.F.S. man from Watt's *Dover Front Line* leaning nonchalantly against a parapet and saying "We see the flash, count 60, and bang! there she is". This single shot demolishes the Nazi panoply in a manner which could not be achieved in any other way, particularly since there was such a lack of aggressive film material about England.

This is Blitz contains an amazing visual analysis of the Blitzkrieg technique, using Poland as an example. In broad outline it brings the chapter-headings of F. O. Miksche's book "Blitzkrieg" to life, and for this alone it must be of especial value in the U.S.A. today, where the citizenry are wanting to learn about war in real earnest. The one weakness of this film arises in its second reel (each of these films is two reels long) owing apparently to the lack of satisfactory counter-attacking material of a blitz variety from British sources. This will no doubt be very shortly remedied.

This is Blitz and its companion pictures *Forward Commandos* and *Food—Weapon of Conquest* are significant for special reasons other than those already mentioned. When the National Film Board first started its production activities it had to face the fact that the United States was still, in name at least, a neutral country. This rather difficult situation (particularly difficult because of the instinctive tendency for Canada and the U.S.A. to tie up together more and more) was ingeniously enough exploited by Grierson and Legg, as may be seen from the earlier films already referred to. But today the new batch of films makes it clear that the Film Board is now in a much freer position. The tendency to identify the national interests of the U.S.A. and Canada as a vital part of the War effort of the United Nations is a noteworthy aspect of recent productions.

In *Food—Weapon of Conquest*, for instance, there are two sub-titles which gain immensely by antithesis. One is a statement by Morgenthau of U.S.A. indicating that one of the major problems of New World agriculture must be

the supply of adequate food after the war to a Europe whose food supplies and transport systems will have been dislocated. The other (referring to the use of starvation or semi-starvation by the Nazis) is a quotation from Hitler in which he states that no action, however cruel, is unjustified in wartime if that action accelerates the conclusion of the war.

It is actually around these two themes that the food film is built up. Like *This is Blitz* it contains scenes (all the more eloquent because they are so sparsely used) which depict in full horror the effects on ordinary people of the Nazi war system. Over against this it puts the enormous possibilities of a scientifically planned New World agriculture system acting on an international and co-operative basis.

There is no space further to detail the specific examples of the propaganda approach of the Canadian films. To sum up their main achievement, it is probably just to say that they are not merely interpreters of policy but actually the pacemakers of policy; and this remark is a tribute not merely to the makers of the films but to the far-sightedness of one of the most powerful of the United Nations, the democracy of Canada.

The fact that this series of films is having a considerable box-office success in the theatres of Canada and the U.S.A. makes it more than probable that they would have a similar success in this country. Their propaganda and informational value is certainly important enough to make it an urgent matter that the present regulations under the Films Act should be amended to enable them to achieve Exhibitors' quota, and thereby normal distribution on the screens of Britain.

SIGHT and SOUND

SUMMER NUMBER

Articles on:—

CHILDREN AND FILMS

RUNNING A SPECIALIST THEATRE

WHITHER THE SHORT

and

NEWS FROM NEW YORK

6d.

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ROSTER OF M.O.I. FILMS, SEPTEMBER 1st, 1941 TILL 31st MARCH, 1942

We are indebted to the Ministry of Information for permission to publish the following lists of films and statistical analysis which brings up to date the lists published in our issue of October, 1941

1. THEATRICAL AND NON-THEATRICAL RELEASES

* Indicates a five-minute film. Names in brackets do not appear on the credit titles of the films concerned. "O" indicates that a film has been sent overseas. "O.O." indicates primarily for overseas use, and "O.O.O." indicates exclusively for overseas use

TITLE	PROD. UNIT	PRODUCER	DIRECTOR	LENGTH Feet	RELEASE DATE		NOTES
					T.	N.T.	
Action	Technique	J. Carr and S. Box (I. Dalrymple)	Muriel Baker	788	—	3/42	Commentary by John Snagge.
Air Operations	Crown	(I. Dalrymple)	(H. Watt)	1,875	—	2/42	An arrangement of Target for Tonight for non-T. distribution.
All Those in Favour	Paul Rotha Pd.	Paul Rotha	D. Alexander	2,053	—	1/42	O.O. With Arthur Mann.
*Arms from Scrap	Movietone	—	—	800	2/42	3/42	O. Commentary by Leslie Mitchell. Partly Newsreel compilation.
Atlantic Charter	Crown	—	—	1,779	—	10/41	O. Presentation film to President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. Compiled from newsreel material.
*Battle of the Books	Paul Rotha Pd.	Paul Rotha	J. Chambers	681	10/41	1/42	O.
Blood Transfusion	Paul Rotha Pd.	Paul Rotha	H. Nieter	3,401	—	2/42	O.O. With diagrams designed by the Isotype Institute. For Medical audiences only. A popular non-T. version (1,766 ft.) under the same title is also available.
*Builders	Crown	(I. Dalrymple)	P. Jackson	731	3/42	5/42	O. Introduced by John Hilton.
Building for Victory	Pathé	—	—	965	—	2/42	O.O. Newsreel compilation.
Chacun Son Dieu	Strand	—	R. Keene	1,138	—	—	O.O.O. Mainly Library compilation. French and Arabic versions only. Assoc. Producer: (Basil Wright).
Casier Pigeon	See Winged Messengers.	(F. Sainsbury)	(Margaret Thomson)	392	—	3/42	Assoc. Producer (Edgar Anstey).
Compost Heap (Making A)	Realist	—	—	—	—	—	—
*Corvettes	Spectator	—	I. Scott	699	9/41	1/42	O.
Country Women, The	Seven League	—	J. Page	1,249	—	1/42	O. Assoc. Producer: Paul Rotha.
Cultivation	Realist	(F. Sainsbury)	Margaret	1,094	—	1/42	O. Assoc. Producer: (Edgar Anstey).
*Dangers in the Dark	Public Relationship	—	R. Massingham and G. Wallace	582	10/41	1/42	O.
*Dig for Victory	Spectator	(M. Hankinson)	—	563	10/41	1/42	O. Partly compiled from How to Dig and Cultivation. Assoc. Producer: (Edgar Anstey).
Empire's New Armies	Pathé	—	—	962	—	1/42	O.O. Newsreel compilation.
Ferry Pilot	Crown	I. Dalrymple	P. Jackson	2,779	2/41	5/42	O. Released through A.B.F.D.
*Few Oss. A Day, A Fighting Allies	Paul Rotha Pd.	—	—	565	10/41	1/42	O. Designed by the Isotype Institute.
*Filling the Gap	Movietone	—	Louise Birt	810	—	1/42	O.
Fire Guard	Realist	(F. Sainsbury)	—	483	4/42	6/42	O. A Hallas-Batchelor Cartoon. Assoc. Producer: (Edgar Anstey). Music: E. H. Meyer.
For Children Only	Shell	E. Anstey	G. Bell	2,256	—	2/42	O.O.
Germany Calling	Strand	A. Shaw	J. Eldridge	662	—	3/42	—
He Went to the Cupboard	Spectator	—	—	220	12/41	1/42	O. Released by the Newsreel Assoc. Devised and edited by C. Ridley.
*H.M. Minelayer	Films of G.B. Verity	S. Box and J. Carr	A. Buchanan H. Cass	768	—	1/42	With Joan Sterndale-Bennett and Hay Petrie.
H.M. Navies Go to Sea	Movietone	—	—	736	9/41	1/42	O.O. Newsreel compilation.
*Hospital Nurse	G.B.S.S.	—	F. Searle	979	—	1/42	O.
Hot on the Spot	Films of G.B.	—	A. Buchanan	713	11/41	2/42	A.S. Ministry of Food.
How to Thatch	Strand	—	R. Bond	902	—	1/42	O.
Jane Brown Changes her Job	Verity	S. Box and J. Carr	H. Cooper	1,033	—	1/42	O. Assoc. Producer: Edgar Anstey.
Keeping Rabbits for Extra Meat	Strand	—	R. Bond	791	—	1/42	O.
*Knights of St. John	Strand	D. Taylor	J. Lewis	849	—	2/42	Commentary by Wilfred Pickles.
*Land Girls	Rotha Pd.	D. Alexander	J. Page	644	2/42	4/42	Assoc. Producer: Edgar Anstey.
Listen to Britain	Crown	I. Dalrymple	H. Jennings	747	2/42	5/42	O.
London, Autumn, 1941	Films of G.B.	—	—	1,685	4/42	4/42	O. Released through British Lion.
Men of Tomorrow	Technique	S. Box and J. Carr	A. Travers	890	—	—	O.O.O. Commentary by Sir Gilbert Scott.
*Mobile Engineers	Strand	D. Taylor	M. Gordon	898	—	1/42	O.
More Eggs from your Hens	Sound Services	—	J. Rogers	685	3/42	5/42	Assoc. Producer: (Edgar Anstey)
*Naval Operations	Shell	E. Anstey	G. Thorpe	973	—	1/42	O. Library compilation. Diagrams by Frank Rodker.
*Newspaper Train	Realist	—	L. Lye	848	2/42	4/42	O.
*100,000 Women	Soviet Film Agency	—	—	848	2/42	4/42	O. Library compilation.
Out and About	G.B.I.	—	S. Irving	805	—	1/42	—
Plastic Surgery in Wartime	Realist	J. Taylor	F. Sainsbury	2,328	—	—	O.O.O. Commentary by Sir Harold Gillies. In Technicolor. A short addition (330ft.) is titled Plastic Surgery.
Post 23	Strand	(D. Taylor)	R. Bond	926	—	1/42	O.
R.A.F. in Action	Movietone	—	—	937	—	1/42	O.O. Newsreel compilation.
*Royal Observer Corps	Spectator	(M. Hankinson)	G. Gunn	666	12/41	3/42	O.
*Rush Hour	20th Cent. Fox	(E. Black)	A. Asquith	554	1/42	4/42	O. Commentary by Roy Hay. Assoc. Producer: Edgar Anstey.
Storing Vegetables Indoors	Realist	(F. Sainsbury)	Margaret	1,138	—	3/42	O. Commentary by Roy Hay. Assoc. Producer: Edgar Anstey.
Storing Vegetables Outdoors	Realist	(F. Sainsbury)	Thomson	785	—	3/42	O. Commentary by Colin Wills. Compiled by John Monck from library material.
*Tale of Two Cities	Crown	—	Margaret	688	2/42	3/42	O. O.O. Produced in association with British Paramount News.
They Met in London	Paul Rotha Pd.	—	Thomson	—	—	1/42	O.
*Venture, Adventure	Crown	I. Dalrymple	C. Haase	679	11/41	2/42	O.
*Victory Over Darkness	Realist	—	—	523	3/42	5/42	O. Based on a film of the same name prepared by St. Dunstan's.
*War in the East	Shell	(E. Anstey)	(N. Baxter)	635	12/41	3/42	O. Maps only. With J. Horrabin.
Wavell's 30,000	Crown	(I. Dalrymple)	J. Monck	4,309	3/42	—	O. Largely compiled from A.F.U. and newsreel material. Released by M.G.M.

TITLE	PROD. UNIT	PRODUCER	DIRECTOR	LENGTH Feet	RELEASE DATE			NOTES
					T.	—	N.T.	
Way to Plough (A)	Verity	S. Box and J. Carr	C. Hornby	1,431	—	12/41	O. Commentary by Frederick Grisewood. Assoc. Producer: Edgar Anstey.	
*Winged Messengers	G.B.I.	—	Mary Field	675	6/41	9/41	Commentary by Colin Wills. Issued as N.T. Film under the title <i>Carrier Pigeon</i> .	
Winter on the Farm	Green Park	—	R. Keene	1,347	—	2/42	Assoc. Producer: Edgar Anstey.	
*W.R.N.S. W.V.S.	Strand Verity	D. Taylor S. Box and J. Carr	I. Moffat Louisa Birt	746 2,034	11/41	2/42	O.	
Youth Takes a Hand	Films of G.B.	—	A. Buchanan	1,125	—	1/42	O. A slightly shorter British version omitting the scenes of Mary Welch and Lady Reading has been prepared.	
							O.	

2 NEWSREEL TRAILERS

TITLE OR THEME	PROD. UNIT	GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT CONCERNED	RELEASE DATE	NOTES
Empty Houses	Pathé	Home Security	9/41	
Address Clearly	Universal	G.P.O.	9/41	
Fuel Economy (Heating)	Films of G.B.	Mines	12/41	
Post Early	Pub. Pics.	G.P.O.	12/41	
Food Advice Centre	Verity	Food	21/41	
Swimmers	Pub. Pics.	Supply	12/41	
Sneezing	Strand	Health	1/42	Regional Distribution only. With Cyril Fletcher
Fuel Economy (Cooking)	Films of G.B.	Mines	1/42	
A.T.S.	N.S.S.	W.O.	1/42	
Milk	Pub. Pics.	Food	1/42	Regional Distribution only.
Fuel Economy (Hot Water)	Films of G.B.	Mines	2/42	
Paper Salvage	Films of G.B.	Supply	3/42	

3 COLONIAL FILM UNIT PRODUCTIONS

TITLE	LENGTH	DATE OF DESPATCH OVERSEAS	NOTES
This is a Searchlight	495	20/11/41	
This is a Special Constable	815	20/11/41	
This is a Barrage Balloon	672	20/11/41	
These are Paratroops	1,000	9/12/41	War Office Material
This is an A.R.P. Warden	987	11/12/41	
This is an Anti-Aircraft Gun	600	10/11/41	
Our Indian Soldiers	525	12/2/42	Material from a Day with the Indian Army
Self Help in Food	1,175	12/2/42	
These are London Firemen	1,030	—	
With Our African Troops—Early Training	266-16 mm. only	12/2/42	African Material
With Our African Troops—On Active Service	708	12/2/42	
Soldiers' Comforts from Uganda	755	12/2/42	African Material

4 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

NUMBER OF FILMS DELIVERED

Year ending Aug. 31, 1940 Year ending Aug. 31, 1941 Seven months ending Mar. 31, 1942 TOTAL

5-Minute Films	7	42	24	73
5-Minute Films acquired from other sources.	1	6	7	14
Films for general T. use	13	9	4	26
Films mainly for T. use overseas	2	2	5	9
Films for general non-T. use	—	45	20	65
Films mainly for non-T. use overseas	—	4	9	13
GRAND TOTAL	23	108	69	200

COMBINED FOOTAGE OF FILMS DELIVERED

Year ending Aug. 31, 1940 Year ending Aug. 31, 1941 Seven months ending Mar. 31, 1942 TOTAL

5-Minute films	4,616	29,970	14,490	49,076
5-Minute films acquired from other sources	458	3,420	4,884	8,762
Films for general T. use	16,426	14,290	4,733	35,449
Films mainly for T. use overseas	2,107	5,102	4,733	11,942
Films for general non-T. use	—	42,987	19,743	62,730
Films mainly for non-T. use overseas	—	3,225	15,252	18,477
GRAND TOTAL	23,607	98,994	63,835	186,436
Trailers	510	2,380	1,500	4,390
Colonial Film Unit Productions	3,980	10,149	13,362	27,491

† Includes 3 films available on 16 mm. only.

SCIENTIFIC FILM SOCIETIES

The increasing strain of civil defence duties has in no way lessened the interest taken in the scientific films shown during the third session by the Aberdeen Scientific Film Club. True, membership this year was not quite as large as in the preceding session, but this can be accounted for almost entirely by the shift of personnel due to war conditions. The greatest difficulties encountered were in getting first class talkie films. The club started off by showing programmes of the best films which could be procured, without any padding from comedy or historical films, with the consequence that the curtailed supply was to a certain extent reflected in the programmes presented. Nevertheless the marks awarded by the audiences, who are trenchant critics, seldom fell below seventy per cent on the average. How long this can be maintained is a question not for the club promoters but for the film producers. The effect of mechanised warfare, and an appreciation of the significance of machines, has evolved an audience which will absorb films like *Distillation* and *Hydraulics* with relish, but will display only passing interest in pseudo-biological films. Real teaching and information take precedence every time over anything which savours of "talking down to the audience".

At the forthcoming Conference on the Scientific Film the Club will be represented by Dr. Archibald Clow, lecturer in Chemistry in the University. One of the things which it is hoped will come out of this Conference is the realization that the film is an excellent medium for the presentation of experimental set-ups, which are expensive and from which nothing is gained by having to prepare the material at, say, yearly intervals, for presentation to a fresh audience or race of students. Industry, too, is an almost unexplored field for good films explanatory of industrial processes. If the fractionation of oil can be made interesting and intelligible by a film like *Distillation*, what is to prevent us having a series of similar films illustrative of industry as a whole? The youth of practically every community has in its neighbourhood a selective industrial environment, and has little opportunity of learning about industry as a whole. If we are to have a planned economy, it is just as important for the London youth to know about the quarrying of the Aberdeen granite, of which the Embankment is built, as for the Aberdeen youth to appreciate the significance of Portland cement.

The London Scientific Film Society held the fourth and final performance of the season on May 16th in the Imperial Institute Cinema, when the programme included *This is Colour*, Imperial Chemical Industry's new technicolor film on dyes; *Boulder Dam*, the United States Government's record of the Colorado River project, and *Galapagos*, Dartington Hall Film Unit's famous document on animal evolution, the production of which was assisted by the Zoological Society. A commentary to the last film was spoken by Dr. Julian Huxley who answered a number of good questions from a lively audience. This has probably been the Society's most successful season since its inception.

MAY 1st, '41—

MAY 1st, '42



FIVE MINUTERS

Visit from Canada

News Train

Victory Over Darkness

Filling The Gap

Work Party

NON-THEATRICALS

(1 Reel)

Living With Strangers

When The Pie Was Opened

Canadian Fighters

Cultivation

Storing Vegetables Indoors

Storing Vegetables Outdoors

Compost Heap

Hedging

Ditching

Good Value

Canada in London

SPECIALS

Plastic Surgery in Wartime

(Three Reels Technicolor)

Plastic Surgery

(Supplement 1 Reel)

Goodbye Yesterday

(2 Reels)

The Harvest Shall Come

(4 Reels)

REALIST FILM UNIT

47 OXFORD STREET, W.1

Telephone: GERRARD 1958

THE WAR—A PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION

This time the common man in all lands will build a new world, says HENRY A. WALLACE*

Reprinted by courtesy of *Reynolds News*

THIS is a fight between a slave world and a free world.

Just as the United States in 1862 could not remain half slave and half free, so in 1942 the world must make a decision for complete victory one way or the other.

As we begin the final stages of this fight to the death between the free and the slave world, it is worth while refreshing our minds about the march of freedom for the common man.

The idea of freedom is derived from the Bible with its extraordinary emphasis on the dignity of the individual. The prophets of the Old Testament were the first to preach social justice.

But that which was sensed many years before Christ was not given powerful political expression until our nation was formed as a federal union 150 years ago: even then, the march of the common people had only begun.

Most of them were unable to read and write, and there were no State schools to which all children could go. Men and women cannot be really free until they have plenty to eat and time and ability to read, to think and to talk things over.

If we measure freedom by standards of nutrition, education and self-government, we might rank the United States and certain nations of Western Europe very high. But this is unfair to other nations where education has become widespread only in the past 20 years.

Russia, for example, has changed from an illiterate to a literate nation within one generation, and in the process Russia's appreciation of freedom has increased tremendously.

Everywhere reading and writing are accompanied by industrial progress and industrial progress inevitably brings a strong Labour Movement.

Fundamentally, there are no backward peoples, lacking in mechanical sense. Russians, Chinese and Indians all learn to read and write and operate machines just as well as your children or my children.

Everywhere the common people are on the march. By millions, they are learning to read and write, learning to think together, to use tools. They are learning to think together in Labour Movements, some of which may be extreme or impracticable at first, but which will settle down to serve effectively the interests of the common man.

In the countries where the ability to read and write has been acquired recently—62 per cent of the people of the world are still illiterate—where people have had no long experience of governing themselves on the basis of their own thinking, it is easy for demagogues to prostitute the mind of the common man to their own base ends.

Such a demagogue may get financial help from some person of wealth.

The demagogue is the curse of the modern

world; of all demagogues, the worst are those who are financed by wealthy men who sincerely believe their wealth is likely to be safer if they can hire men with political "it" to change the signpost and to lure the people back into the most degraded slavery.

The march of freedom of the last 150 years has been a long drawn-out people's revolution.

In this great revolution of the people there were the American Revolution of 1775, the French Revolution of 1792, the Latin-American Revolution of the Bolivarian era, the German Revolution of 1848, and the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Each spoke for the common man in terms of blood on the battlefield.

Some went to excess, but the significant thing is that people broke their way to the light. More of them learned to think and work together.

The people's revolution aims at peace, not at violence, but if the rights of the common man are attacked, it unleashes the ferocity of the she-bear who has lost a cub.

The people are on the march towards even fuller freedom than the most fortunate people of the world have hitherto enjoyed.

No Nazi counter-revolution will stop it. The common man will smoke the Hitler stooges out into the open in the United States, in Latin-America, and in India. He will destroy their influence. No Laval or Mussolini will be tolerated in a free world.

The people, in their millennial and revolutionary march forward, are manifesting here on earth the dignity that is in every human soul. They hold as their credo Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, which are the very core of the revolution for which the United Nations have taken their stand.

We in the United States may think there is nothing very revolutionary about freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and freedom from fear of secret police.

But when we begin to think about the significance of freedom from want for the average man, then we know that the revolution of the past 150 years has not been completed either here in the United States or in any other nation in the world. We know this revolution cannot stop until freedom from want has actually been attained.

We failed in our job after the World War. We did not know how to go about building an enduring world-wide peace. We lacked the nerve to follow through and prevent German rearmament. We did not build a peace treaty on the fundamental doctrines of the people's revolution. We did not strive to create a world where there could be freedom from want for all peoples.

But by our very errors we have learned much; and after this war we will be in a position to

utilise our knowledge and build a world which will be economically, politically, and, I hope, spiritually sound.

Modern science, which is a by-product and essential part of the people's revolution, has made it technologically possible to see that all peoples throughout the world get enough to eat.

Peace must mean a better standard of living for the common man, not merely in the United States and England, but also in India, Russia, China and Latin-America—not merely in the United Nations, but also in Germany, Italy and Japan.

Some have spoken of "the American Century." I say that the century we are entering, which will come into being after this war, can be, and must be, the century of the common man.

Perhaps it will be America's opportunity to support the freedoms and duties by which the common man must live.

Everywhere the common man must learn to build his own industries with his own hands.

Everywhere the common man must learn to increase his productivity so that he and his children can eventually pay to the world community all that they have received.

No nation will have the God-given right to exploit other nations. The older nations will have the privilege of helping the younger nations to get started on the path of industrialisation, but there must be neither military nor economic imperialism.

Modern science must be released from German slavery.

The international cartels that serve American greed and the German will to power must go.

Cartels in the peace to come must be subject to international control for the common man as well as being under the control of the respective home governments.

In this way, we can prevent the Germans again building a war machine while we sleep.

With international monopoly pools under control, it will be possible for inventions to serve all people, instead of only a few.

When peace comes, the citizen again will have the supreme duty of sacrificing a lesser interest for the greater interest of general welfare.

Those who write the Peace must think of the whole world. There can be no privileged peoples.

If we really believe we are fighting for a people's peace, the rest becomes easy. Production? Yes, it will be easy to get production without strikes or sabotage, production with whole-hearted co-operation.

I need say little about our duty to fight. It is true American youth hates war with a holy hatred. But because of that fact and because Hitler and the German people stand as the very symbol of war, we shall fight with tireless enthusiasm until war and the possibility of war has been removed from this planet.

(continued on p. 78)

War—A People's Revolution

(continued from p. 77)

I am convinced that the Summer and Autumn of 1942 will be the time of supreme crisis for us all.

Hitler, like a prizefighter who realises he is on the verge of a knock-out, is gathering all his remaining forces for one last desperate blow.

We may be sure Hitler and Japan will co-operate—perhaps an attack by Japan against Alaska and our North-West coast, at a time when German transport planes will be shuttled across from Dakar to furnish the leadership and stiffening for a German uprising in Latin-America.

We must especially prepare to stifle fifth columnists in the United States who will try, not merely to sabotage our war plants but, infinitely more important, our minds.

We must be prepared for the worst kind of fifth column work in Latin-America, much of it operating through the agency of governments with which the United States is at present at peace.

When I say this, I recognise that the peoples both of Latin-America and of those nations which are supporting the agencies by which the fifth columnists work, are overwhelmingly on the side of the democracies.

FILM SOCIETY NEWS

The Manchester and Salford Film Society reports that the result of their questionnaire on programmes to their members has established that:—(a) Members of the Manchester and Salford Film Society have a preference for Soviet films; (b) Members of the Manchester and District Film Institute Society have a preference for French films; (c) The most popular films shown during the past season were *La Grande Illusion* and *We From Kronstadt*; (d) The films most desired for the coming season are *La Bête Humaine*, *Alexander Nevski*, *L'Esclave Blanche* and *The Rich Bride*. The joint Manchester Societies are considering the possibilities of a joint summer session consisting of three programmes in association with the official representatives of three of the United Nations—France, Czechoslovakia and China. The latter country will be represented by Iven's 400,000,000 and details of the other programmes will be announced later. A 16 mm. programme of Soviet shorts is also planned.

As originally planned the Belfast Film Institute Society's season was to have ended in early April, but so unexpectedly favourable have conditions been that it was decided to hold an extra show. It seemed the obvious policy to make this a special Russian show, so *Musical Story* was booked, with a supporting programme of Russian shorts, some actualities, others cartoons. The one non-Russian film of the programme was a revival of Len Lye's *Colour Box*. With this, the eighth show of the season, the Society ended its Repertory series. The Annual General Meeting follows in June and at this it is the Society's custom to show a film classic on sub-standard film. This year an early Russian silent film will be screened.

NEWS & SPECIALISED THEATRE ASSOCIATION SHORT FILM BOOKINGS FOR MAY/JUNE 1942

Week commencing	Week commencing
May 17th	Poles Weigh Anchor
17th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
24th	Poplar Trappers
May 24th	Victoria Station News Theatre, S.W.1
June 14th	Plane Sailing
May 22nd	The News Theatre, Manchester
June 7th	Play the Game
May 24th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
June 14th	Playing with Neptune
May 22nd	The News Theatre, Nottingham
June 7th	Russian Scenes and Songs
May 24th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
June 1st	Sage Brush and Silver
May 24th	The Tatler Newsreel Theatre, Newcastle
31st	The Tatler Theatre, Manchester
June 14th	San Francisco
17th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
May 24th	Seeing is Believing
31st	The News Theatre, Nottingham
June 14th	Self Control
17th	The Classic Cinema, South Croydon
May 24th	Servant of Mankind
17th	The News Theatre, Nottingham
June 7th	Soldiers of the Sky
May 31st	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
24th	Soviet Songs and Dances
24th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
June 14th	Snow Dogs
May 31st	The News Theatre, Leeds
17th	The Tatler Theatre, Manchester
June 7th	Speaking of the Weather
May 31st	The Tatler Newsreel Theatre, Newcastle
17th	Symphony in Snow
May 31st	News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
17th	The News Theatre, Leeds
31st	The News Theatre, Birmingham
June 14th	That Uncertain Feeling
17th	The Tatler Theatre, Chester
May 17th	The Fox Hunt
17th	Waterloo Station News Theatre, S.E.1
17th	The World's News Theatre, W.2
31st	The Great Train Robbery
31st	The News Theatre, Aberdeen
June 14th	The Hockey Champ
17th	Eros Theatre, W.1
25th	The Jungle
17th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
17th	Timber
17th	News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
17th	Embassy, Notting Hill Gate
17th	Thinking Aloud
17th	The Tatler Newsreel Theatre, Newcastle
17th	Town and Gown
17th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
17th	Village in India
17th	The News Theatre, Newcastle-on-Tyne
17th	West of the Rockies
17th	The News Theatre, Manchester
17th	Western Isles
17th	Waterloo Station News Theatre, S.E.1
17th	Western Isles
17th	Victoria Station News Theatre, S.W.1
17th	The News Theatre, Bristol
17th	Work Mates
17th	Embassy, Notting Hill Gate
17th	World Garden
17th	The News Theatre, Manchester
17th	The News Theatre, Bristol
17th	The Tatler Newsreel Theatre, Newcastle
17th	FEATURE REVIVALS
17th	A Musical Story
17th	The Tatler Theatre, Manchester
17th	Anthony Adverse
17th	The Classic, Hendon, N.W.14
17th	Convoy
17th	The Classic, Southampton
17th	Flight Command
17th	The Classic Cinema, South Croydon
17th	Gaslight
17th	Vogue Cinema, S.W.17
17th	The Classic, Hendon, N.W.1
17th	General Suvorov
17th	The Tatler Theatre, Leeds
17th	The Tatler Theatre, Manchester
17th	Hudson Bay
17th	The Classic, Baker Street, W.1
17th	Love on the Dole
17th	Embassy, Notting Hill Gate
17th	Mars Brothers Go West
17th	The Vogue Cinema, S.W.17
17th	Pastor Hall
17th	The Classic Cinema, S. Croydon
17th	Quiet Wedding
17th	Embassy, Notting Hill Gate
17th	Seventh Heaven
17th	Classic, Baker Street, W.1
17th	Spring Parade
17th	The Classic, Hendon, N.W.1

THE PROPAGANDA VALUE OF ACHIEVEMENT

EDITH MANVELL

WHEN people are asked to make sacrifices for the war effort the result is very like giving up sugar in tea during the Lenten fast. Those who give up a little luxury are often the most complacent about their contribution to war-time economy and the call for "austerity". They seem to have no sense of proportion. The same may be said of the national propaganda policy: it is a very miscellaneous assortment, technically on the same level as commercial advertising. It appeals to the instincts of fear or personal vanity; if it tries to arouse a sense of patriotism, it often does so by a negative approach. The effect wears off in a very short time; slogans and clichés soon become ineffectual and the lack of co-ordination and purposeful drive leaves one with the feeling that things are not so vitally urgent.

In reaction to this vague perception of what total war means, those men and women who know that defeat would involve the loss of hope in a better future, feel compelled to keep up a constant stream of criticism most of which is justified. It is understandable that the most active and socially-minded people are more easily discouraged by constant frustration in their desire to achieve something than the passive-minded people. This war has already proved that inactivity leads to despondency sooner than hardship and danger. The Nazis know this and have applied this insidious weapon against their intended victims. Criticism is necessary, and it is often effective as a spur to action but it should not make us feel that nothing will ever go right. A more positive attitude must be taken, even though the war situation looks grim. We want to hear about achievements, not only on the battle front but on the home front as well.

In the U.S.S.R. great achievements and hard work in industry receive the honour of public recognition. In this country, courage in the face of great physical danger, in battle or in civil defence, is publicly recognised, but toil and sweat day after day and week after week pass unnoticed. We hear of things that go wrong, of strikes and absenteeism, but rarely of the endurance and effort which are an example of a dynamic will to victory.

As a statement of the much demanded war aims, the principles expressed in the Atlantic Charter will have to suffice for the present; they at least allow for varying interpretation which avoids provoking any violent dissension. But a mere expression of ideals cannot inspire a nation with a dynamic faith and will to victory. We need the influence of great leadership and exemplary behaviour. And the example must not be limited to those who rule in high places but must be drawn from amongst the men and women with whom we work and come in daily contact. During the heavy raids, it was the leadership of those who were on the spot helping their neighbours which kept up the morale of the people, and not the official organisations at distant headquarters. It is the same spirit which has made the U.S.S.R. and China resist the most ruthless aggression. We need a propaganda policy which will recognise and encourage this spirit that makes possible

the sustained efforts of the people working in industry, on the land, and in the services. It must be made more real to us and not cheapened by a certain type of journalistic sensationalism. We must present to the world the example of everyday human achievement of the common people which by its sincerity and determination commands respect and admiration.

It is in this that Documentary films can do some of their greatest work. Through this medium the relationship between the individual and the forces at work in the world to-day are seen in terms of human values and not as the statistician, the economist or the mass observer sees them. Too few films with a propaganda purpose base their appeal on those qualities which inspire loyalty, a desire for mutual service and maintenance of the decencies of life. Newsreel types of film, instructional and recruiting films, and films which merely record events are useful in their way, but there have been far too few true documentaries. We need a truer perspective of democracy as a whole, striving to attain those ideals which at present seem blurred and intangible. Faith in the deeper spiritual values which have inspired mankind is the ultimate driving force to action.

S.O.S.

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ACH week renews the interest which readers feel in their copy of the "Kinematograph Weekly".

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Kine^{matograph} WEEKLY

93 LONG ACRE : : LONDON : : W.C.2

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR,
Documentary News Letter.

DEAR SIR,

THERE are four cinemas in the district where I live. This week the four main features are *H. M. Pulham, Esq.*, *Keep 'Em Flying*, *Ladies in Retirement*, *You'll Never Get Rich*. Of these only one film—*Keep 'Em Flying*—is remotely connected with the war and that in a frivolous and pointless way. All the other films, so I am told, are good; they are all American, made before America came openly into the war, and so do nothing but instil that feeling of pre-war complacency among thousands who flock to see them. *H. M. Pulham, Esq.*, is one of those romantic dramas; *Keep 'Em Flying* has comedy, songs, romance, and aviation thrills—guaranteed to drive away any wartime blues; *Ladies in Retirement* is a murder thriller, and lastly *You'll Never Get Rich* promises to be a mixture of chorus girls and Army camps. These are the films I've got to choose from if I want to go to the pictures next week. Five minutes of newsreel is the nearest I will get to the war.

Before the war while feature films lived in a make-believe world of their own, documentary film makers, particularly in this country, were trying to break down the complacent, airy-fairy attitude that was existing everywhere and showing the public something of themselves—what they were really like, not what they thought or hoped they were like.

By September 1939, documentary films had achieved some success and were able, with the help of the Ministry of Information, to change over to wartime needs and conditions in a minimum of time and with the minimum of fuss. The war presented new problems and the use of the film was one way to solve them. But the feature film makers still went on making their films behind their smug, bogus mask. For some time after the outbreak of war there was little or no sign in feature films that their makers were aware of the drastic change in conditions. They carried on working out their love affairs, blaring out their musical comedies, and solving their mystery thrillers. It wasn't until after Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain that the possibility of war as a subject for feature films was at all fully realised. The M.O.I. five-minuters were coming regularly each week but only to fill in a gap in the programme. The war didn't go very well for us for a long while. People became more and more depressed and the cinema became more and more a means of escape.

The war has been on for nearly three years and we are only just beginning to come out of our coma. *The Foreman Went to France*, *One of Our Aircraft is Missing*, *The Day Will Dawn*—these films have been released during the past month and the Trade papers are preparing us for more.

This may or may not be a change in propaganda policy but whatever it is we are at last beginning to realise the potentialities of the feature film as a propaganda medium. The feature film cannot help but be the mainstay of any normal cinema programme and the sooner it is geared to the war effort the better. The feature film industry must be governed by a definite propaganda policy. The feature film industry must become part of, not a distraction from the war effort.

Yours etc.
"FILMGOER."



In future The Strand Film Company will be working in conjunction with British National Films Ltd. Strand Films will continue to function as a separate production unit, and the same Technical Staff will carry on.

The British National Studios at Elstree will be Strand Films production headquarters.



THE STRAND FILM COMPANY LTD.

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